About Agronomy

Every Day, Agronomy

Every day, everyone is impacted by agronomy. From the endless green fields of corn and soybeans which cover the Midwest, the vibrant yellows of sunflowers in Canada, the expansive rice patties of Asia, the vast acres of cotton drying under the hot Southwestern sun, to the lush green mountains of coffee growing in Central America, these crops do not just happen. Hard work on the part of the grower, aided by the **agronomic sciences** and technology, make this possible.

Every day, everyone is impacted by agronomy. From the coffee you drink to the vegetables you eat, from the ethanol-based gas in your car to the grains used to feed chicken and cattle, and from the grass on the golf course to the natural fibers of the clothing you wear and the medicines you consume, all are products of agronomy.

What is Agronomy? Agronomists make this possible through the application of soil and plant sciences to crop production that incorporates the wise use of natural resources and conservation practices to produce **food, feed, fuel, fiber,** and **pharmaceutical crops** while maintaining and improving the environment.

Agronomists are plant and soil scientists who work to improve crops and **agricultural productivity** while effectively **managing pests and weeds.**

Just a few of the current issues that Agronomists are working on with farmers and producers are organics, biofuels, sustainable agriculture, nutraceuticals, and the green revolution in Africa (PDF).

A Day in the Life of an Agronomist

A career in agronomy keeps you in the center of efforts to increase the production of food, feed, fuels, and fiber for a growing world citizenry. The agronomist has many career paths. You'll find agronomists working in research, teaching, and extension at colleges and universities, for the USDA at their Agricultural Research Stations, in extension offices, for companies, and as consultants in agribusiness. Explore these career paths by following the links above to profiles of our members. Discover more with our careers in agronomy brochure.

Interested in a career in agronomy? View the list of colleges and universities with courses and programs in agronomy, crop science and soil science.

The Science of Agronomy

The evolution and ongoing development of agriculture, enabled by science, is the focus of agronomy and agronomists. Scientific research to enhance productivity while sustaining the integrity of ecological processes encompasses crop science, soil science, and environmental science. The research is communicated and transferred among agronomists and those in related fields on topics of local, regional, national, and international significance. This research may then be used for practical applications. Scientific articles on specific research are available 18 months after publication and presentations from Annual Meetings are available one year after presentation.

Research highlights are also featured via press releases in our Media Area.

The Future of Agronomy

"The evolution of agriculture within the last 11,000 years marked the first major inflection point in food yield and changed forever the character of the human condition. The application of technology to agriculture early in the 20th century induced the next major crop yield inflection point. Identifying the technological wellspring from which increased rates of productivity will be obtained in the decades ahead is far less obvious than during the last century. The agronomic challenge for the decades to come is to increase productivity per unit of land enough to preclude appropriation of other ecosystems for cropland expansion while simultaneously increasing the efficiency of production inputs, reducing their leakage to the environment, and sustaining the integrity of those ecological processes that undergird these intense biological production systems."

This excerpt from the abstract of an article by Fred P. Miller, ASA member and retired Professor of Soil Science at the School of Environmental and Natural Resources at The Ohio State University was written in celebration of 100 years of ASA and the Agronomy Journal.

Questions about Agronomy?

Contact Us

Annual Meetings News

Visa Time
International colleagues attending our meetings, now is the time to apply for your visa. Learn More>>

Got Leadership?
Jumpstart your leadership potential with two workshops in Pittsburgh prior to the meetings. Learn More>>

Annual Meetings, "Footprints in the Landscape: Sustainability through Plant and Soil Sciences," Nov. 1-5, 2009, Pittsburgh, PA

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